



DECEMBER 2013

Happy Holidays!

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Chairman's Outgoing Message

by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Second District

It has been my honor and pleasure to chair the Board of Supervisors this past year, and I want to convey my heartfelt appreciation to my colleagues on the Board now that my tenure is concluded. I congratulate Supervisor Don Knabe for assuming the gavel.

This year, the Board identified several priorities where improving accountability and transparency served as the underlying motivation. Now as I end my tenure as Chairman, I am hopeful that some of the work we have done will make a difference in how our constituents receive information about their County government. On Tuesdays, during our regularly scheduled meetings, we have increased the number of public updates, adding ones from our departments of Health Services and Probation, the Jail Violence Commission Implementation Monitor and more recently from Children and Family Services. These updates are designed to inform the public of the status of significant public policy issues such as the County's implementation of the Affordable Care Act and Public Safety Realignment, policing and incarceration practices and protection of the children under our responsibility.

One of this year's accomplishments we can all embrace was the appointment of an Inspector General for the L.A. County Sheriff's Department. With the confirmation of Max Huntsman, a Deputy Supervisor in the Public Integrity Division at the L.A. District Attorney's office, we can be more assured that the chronic problems of inmate maltreatment at the hands of deputies will be dealt with in a manner that promotes greater accountability, constitutional policing and restores public confidence. Likewise, the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection, with its mandate to review all the County departments that deal with child welfare, will provide recommendations that I expect will ultimately

result in structural, systemic changes that will protect our most vulnerable residents—children.

As Board Chairman, I also had the responsibility of chairing the meetings of the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee. Together we have worked hard to understand, to measure and to mitigate the impact of realignment – the mandated transfer of inmates from State prisons to Los Angeles County for supervision. Yet by far, it is our ongoing discussions about recidivism, how we define it and how we measure our success at re-entry, that have and will be crucial to this effort. We are looking forward to an annual report that documents the committee's work and accomplishments this past year. I want to thank Mark Delgado and the committee's staff for their work this year as well.

I also want to highlight our work on the First 5 L.A. Commission, where we were able to increase funding for early childhood education, develop resources for identifying early signs of autism in younger children and find more money for permanent housing for homeless families. The Commission also established programs to help at-risk young fathers and young mothers learn parenting skills. I'd like to thank the Chief Executive Officer, Board Executive office, County Counsel, the Auditor-Controller and the rest of the County family for their work, patience and cooperation. Finally, a very special thanks to the staff members of the Second District, for they have been exemplary and L.A. County is better for it.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Natural History Museum

(213) 763-DINO

www.nhm.org

Ongoing – Becoming Los Angeles
Through August 3 – Just Add Water
December 22 through April 13 – Traveling the Silk Road

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

(323) 857-6010

www.lacma.org

Through January 23 – David Hockney: Seven Yorkshire Landscape Videos, 2011
Through February 2 – Under the Mexican Sky: Gabriel Figueroa-Art and Film
Through June 22 – Agnes Varda in Californialand
Through July 27 – Calder and Abstraction: From Avant-Garde to Iconic

Center Theatre Group

(213) 628-2772

www.centertheatregroup.org

- **Ahmanson Theatre**
Through January 12 – Peter and the Starcatcher
January 19 through February 9 – A Word or Two
- **Kirk Douglas Theatre**
Through December 29 – The Second City's A Christmas Carol: Twist Your Dickens!
- **Mark Taper Forum**
Through January 5 – The Steward of Christendom
January 29 through March 9 – Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

January 31 through February 2 – Royal New Zealand Ballet

Walt Disney Concert Hall

December 18 – Holiday Organ Spectacular
December 19 through 22 – Rachmaninoff with Dudamel & Wang
December 20 – A Chanticleer Christmas
December 21 – Holiday Sing-Along
December 22 – LA Master Chorale: Handel: Messiah
December 23 – A Swingin' Christmas: The Count Basie Orchestra
December 31 – Carnival at the Hall: New Years Eve with Sergio Mendes and Sheila E.

Grand Park

www.grandparkla.org

December 17 – Downtown Farmers' Market
December 18 – Lunch A La Park

Visit <http://hr.lacounty.gov> for
information on employment
opportunities with the
County of Los Angeles



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Submissions to the DIGEST may be
edited or otherwise altered for clarity.

Check out the DIGEST at

<http://dhrdcap.co.la.ca.us/jic/digest/>



by Mark Richman, M.D.

*Physician Specialist, Emergency Medicine
Olive View-UCLA Medical Center
and Khathy Hoang, Student Volunteer*

Cholesterol: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

Like characters in a cowboy western movie, there's good and bad cholesterol. You are the sheriff in your body's "town." You can recruit good cholesterol and fight bad cholesterol before things get ugly.

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that speeds electrical transmission through the nervous system by covering nerves, like rubber coating covers wires.

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol is often called "bad cholesterol." Some LDL is deposited in artery walls in the heart and brain. It raises heart attack and stroke risk by collecting in a calcium shell (atherosclerotic plaque) in the wall. A thick plaque blocks blood flow and ruptures, triggering a heart attack or stroke.

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol is often called "good" cholesterol." It is transported back to the liver for storage. In this manner, HDL lowers heart attack and stroke risk.

Optimal LDL level depends on your heart attack and stroke risk. Older people and those with diabetes, hypertension, and smoking should have lower LDL levels.

To fight the bad guys (LDL):

1. Get your cholesterol level checked.
2. Discuss with your provider to learn your actual and target/goal levels.
3. Eat healthy. Plants have no cholesterol. Eat lots of oatmeal, fruit, and vegetables.
4. If prescribed cholesterol medications, take them regularly.

To recruit the good guys (HDL):

1. Exercise at least 30 minutes daily. Walking counts!
2. If you drink alcohol, only consume the equivalent of two 8-ounce glasses of wine daily for men and one for women.

Holiday Fire Prevention Tips

from the L.A. County Fire Department

Each year, fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,000 individuals and cause over \$500 million in damage in the United States. According to the United States Fire Administration, there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

Holiday tree fire hazards

Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.

Selecting a tree for the holiday

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needles should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

Caring for your tree

Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. Heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times. Consider using a potted tree.

Disposing of your tree

Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Maintain your holiday lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

FIRE PREVENTION
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OUTGOING MESSAGE

continued from page 1

A hallmark of our representative government, particularly at the local level, is the ability to turn over the reins of leadership seamlessly. And while we bring to the chairmanship our own priorities and style, we do so mindful that while we may differ on matters of politics and policy, we uphold a tradition of civil discourse and informed deliberation. It has been an honor to serve as Board Chairman.

FIRE PREVENTION

continued from page 3

If there is any question as to the integrity of your lights, replace them with a new set of lights.

Do not overload electrical outlets

Follow the directions on the light sets when connecting your lights. Connect lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires. They should not be warm to the touch. Do not leave holiday lights on while unattended.

Use only nonflammable decorations

All decorations should be nonflammable or flame retardant and placed away from heat vents.

Never put wrapping paper in a fireplace

Wrapping paper can produce dangerous sparks and a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion.

Artificial holiday trees

If you use a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Avoid using lit candles

If you use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

Never put lit candles on a tree


Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame—candles, lighters or matches.

Finally, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level and in every room of your home. Test smoke detectors monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help. Practice your home escape plan.





Why We Give



Darlene Lackey
Department of Public Social Services

"With my donation, I can help to improve the well-being of others. I've always had an unselfish regard for or devotion to those who are in need of help. Knowing that I sacrificed something always reassures me of my purpose in life and the many blessings I receive."

Workplace giving begins with each and every one of you. We want to know how and why you give.



CalFresh Provides Better Food for Better Living

CalFresh, California's implementation of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, helps low-income families in Los Angeles County afford healthy food and meet their nutritional needs.

CalFresh provides financial assistance through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, where benefits are added to accounts monthly. The EBT card can be used at any authorized grocery store or farmers' market. Healthy foods are significant since they are essential for normal growth and development.

Food insecurity is a year-round issue affecting millions of families and individuals across the country. In L.A. County, the Department of Public Social Services administers the CalFresh Program, conducting outreach regularly in the community and assisting families and individuals in applying for supplemental food assistance and obtaining information on nutrition.

CalFresh is free to eligible households and individuals. L.A. County residents may call (866) 613-3777 to request an application or apply online at www.dpssbenefits.lacounty.gov.

Check Your Receipts

The Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures reminds you to check your shopping receipts. In the frenzy of holiday and end-of-the-year shopping, shoppers may be drawn to one store over another, attracted by a lower advertised price. With a dizzying array of tiered, multiple discounts, club-card reductions, and varying expiration dates, it can be easy to make mistakes, resulting in a higher price charged at check-out than the price advertised. With electronic scanners and payment by the swipe of a card, shoppers might not pay close attention to the actual sum they are charged.

Shoppers should compare the price advertised to the price charged by check-out scanners, which are connected to the store computers and are only as correct as the information that has been entered. If a store is in the process of price adjustments, granting additional discounts to attract more shoppers, coordination of price sign postings and computer data input can be challenging. If not yet entered into the check-out system, shoppers may not get the price to which they are entitled. Check those receipts!

Shoppers are entitled to the lowest advertised, listed, or labeled price for any specific item at a store location. This is enforced by the Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures. Shoppers should check receipts BEFORE leaving the store to make sure they are correct. If overcharged, a shopper should bring the receipt to the attention of the manager or customer service desk. To report errors, shoppers can call (800) 665-2900, or submit a complaint at acwm.lacounty.gov/scripts/scanform.cfm. All complaints are investigated.

The Weights and Measures Bureau will need the following information to effectively investigate a complaint:

- Complete description of the item or items
- Shelf price and/or advertised price
- Price scanned at the checkout register
- Date the overcharge occurred
- Store name and location

The Weights and Measures Bureau has been protecting consumers and businesses for 98 years and is dedicated to ensuring the integrity of commercial transactions using devices to weigh, measure, or price an item at check-out. Staff conducts routine inspections of retail store scanners in addition to responding to consumer complaints.

Share Your Heart and Your Home

Become a Foster/Adoptive Parent

The holidays hold a special place in most people's hearts. For some, they are the first memories we can recall of our childhood. We can close our eyes and just imagine the Christmas tree scent filling our house, the family gatherings with loved family members from near and far, and the excitement as we waited to rip off the beautiful wrapping of gifts in all shapes and sizes. These are the memories, the stories, and the traditions shared and passed on to future generations for years to come.



Destiny and Faith

Sadly, for some of our children in foster care, this is not their reality. Without a family to call their own, these kids sometimes

spend their holidays in a group home setting or separated from their siblings. Memories of holidays past may sometimes be painful and sad. The idea of having a family to celebrate the holidays with seems like the stuff only fairytales and television shows are made of, certainly not their reality.



In Los Angeles County, we have nearly 500 children in foster care waiting for a family to call their own. Through no fault of their own, their parents have been unable to parent them and they end up moving multiple times from one foster home or group home to another. Left waiting, they truly are the kids who need a home, not just for the holidays, but forever.

Destiny and Faith are two sweet sisters who want nothing more than to be together again, not just for the holidays, but forever. Currently placed in separate homes, these sisters hope to one day be reunified. Destiny, age 15, has an engaging sense of humor, loves to read books, and admits to "tolerating" school, needing a little encouragement to do her work. Faith, age 12, is a great kid: intelligent, funny, and creative. She loves to cook, and dancing and singing are among her favorite activities. Consider adding these loving sisters to your family and create lasting family traditions and memories for these girls!

For more information, call (888) 811-1121 or visit our website at www.ShareYourHeartLA.org. It will be the best thing you do for the holidays or any day.



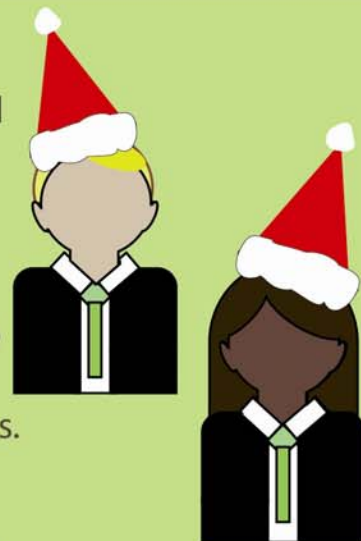
December 2013 CGC Payroll Deduction Challenge: It Starts with You!

Attention Employees:

An employee who signs up for payroll deduction in December will be eligible to receive one of the great opportunity prize drawings below for the monthly Payroll Deduction Challenge!

The monthly Payroll Deduction Challenge will continue through December 31st and there will be one grand prize at the end of the Charitable Giving Campaign. To sign up for payroll deduction, contact your CGC Coordinator or the Office of Workplace Programs.

All employees who already support the Charitable Giving Campaign through payroll deduction are automatically entered in the drawing and will be eligible for one of the opportunity drawing prizes below.



December Payroll Deduction Prizes:



- ★ 20th Century Fox Premium Movie Gift Basket
- ★ Lionsgate "Now You See Me" Framed Movie Poster Autographed by the Cast (Jesse Eisenberg, Isla Fisher, Mark Ruffalo, Woody Harrelson and Dave Franco)
- ★ Six Arclight Cinemas Movie Passes for admission to any Arclight Cinemas.



Monthly winners will be posted on the CGC website. For more info, visit ceo.lacounty.gov/wpp. All prizes provided by the Fund Distribution Agencies.

The 2013 Charitable Giving Campaign Challenge starts with You!



COMMUNITY
HEALTH CHARITIES



Early Holiday Present for L.A. County Veterans!

Patriotic Hall Reopens after \$45 Million Renovation



The holidays came early for Los Angeles County's veterans with the recent reopening of Patriotic Hall! The iconic downtown L.A. landmark is easily visible from the 10-110 Freeway interchange with its massive "Spirit of '76" replica dominating the building's north side. Now, after a \$45 million top-to-bottom renovation, the building serves as the official headquarters of the County's Department of Military and Veterans Affairs – and it functions as a one-stop shop for veterans in need of services.

"Whether seeking housing, health care, counseling, or social service referrals, Los Angeles County's veterans will find what they need at Patriotic Hall," Supervisor Gloria Molina said. "This \$45 million investment into Patriotic Hall is our gift to the men and women of Los Angeles County who served in our armed forces and helped keep our nation safe. They deserve top-quality services and we're proud to deliver."

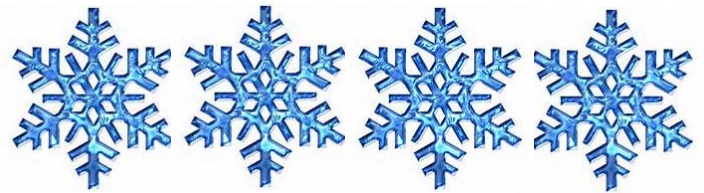
Built in 1925, Patriotic Hall hasn't simply been restored. It has evolved. Originally, the building had no air conditioning, no heating, no women's bathrooms – and absolutely no accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Patriotic Hall now has all these amenities.

Patriotic Hall has modernized, too. It now has computer connectivity, plus video conferencing and teleconferencing abilities – which are available for use not only by staff of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, but by the veterans themselves through various veterans services

organizations housed within Patriotic Hall. These organizations also can enjoy the facility's banquet rooms, gymnasium, and meeting spaces.

Patriotic Hall also contains impressive murals in its lobby – all beautifully restored by the renowned artist Kent Twitchell. And come Memorial Day, both veterans and the general public can examine what will be truly remarkable museum exhibits in the Lincoln Room on Patriotic Hall's second floor.

Patriotic Hall is located at 1816 S. Figueroa St. in Los Angeles.



Christmas Tree Recycling and Drop Off

Not sure what to do with that Christmas tree after the holidays? Visit www.CleanLA.com or call (888) CLEANLA for guidelines on Christmas tree removal in your community.

Many cities provide their residents with curbside Christmas tree removal, while others provide conveniently-located drop-off sites. Residents of the County's 160 unincorporated communities can recycle their trees by leaving them curbside on regular trash collection days, December 26, 2013 through January 18, 2014. These trees will be recycled and used as compost, mulch, or ground cover, which reduces the production of landfill waste and preserves natural resources.

All ornaments, including tinsel, decorations, and metal and plastic tree stands must be removed. Trees over six feet should be cut in half. Those who miss their curbside recycling dates should cut their trees into smaller pieces and place them in a green waste container.

For more environmentally-friendly holiday tips, go to www.CleanLA.com or call (888) CLEANLA.



DPSS VIP participants

County Departments Embrace Veterans' Internship Program

Six years into the launching of a unique program to hire and train veterans, and with the recent lifting of the hard hiring freeze last August, County departments are actively employing veterans.

The Veterans' Internship Program (VIP) is a 12-to-24 month paid internship with medical and dental benefits. The goal of the program is to provide veterans preference in hiring and an opportunity to gain on-the-job training and work experience that will enable them to effectively compete for permanent County positions.

During this current fiscal year, 13 departments have hired and/or promoted Veteran Interns:

- Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures
- Children and Family Services
- Health Services
- Internal Services
- Medical Examiner-Coroner
- Mental Health
- Military and Veterans Affairs
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Health
- Public Social Services
- Regional Planning
- Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
- Sheriff's

Sheryl Spiller, Director of the Department of Public Social Services, made a commitment to hire 100 Veteran Interns by the end of this fiscal year. To date, 64 have either been hired or are in the process of becoming County employees.

Recently, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) rededicated the newly renovated Patriotic Hall.

Ruth Wong, Director of DMVA, is arranging for temporary office space for staff of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to work on-site. This arrangement will allow DHR to work with both active service members and veterans to promote the many employment opportunities that the County has to offer.

Not long ago, the Department of Community and Senior Services offered their technological "know how" to DHR and filmed a video to promote the VIP. The video is available for viewing at www.hr.lacounty.gov.



Grand Park has announced a grand-scale, free, multi-dimensional celebration event for New Year's Eve, "N.Y.E. L.A.," to provide Angelenos from all parts of Los Angeles County with a new central destination where they can join together, for the first time, to ring in the New Year. Encompassing a 12 block area from Hope Street to Spring Street (from The Music Center Plaza to City Hall), this family-friendly event will feature Los Angeles' largest-ever 3-D digital mapping presentation, covering 22 stories of the iconic City Hall. New Year's Eve revelers will also enjoy musical performances, dancing, interactive visual art installations, roving performing artists, an interactive photo booth, food trucks and more. The event takes place on December 31, 2013, from 6 p.m. – midnight, with a first "early" countdown at 9 p.m., in sync with the East Coast, for families with young children.

"The Grand Park team set out to create a New Year's Eve that would measure up to the stature, style and impact of Los Angeles, and one that will unite Angelenos from our diverse communities," said Lucas Rivera, Director, Grand Park. "With its important role as a central gathering place, Grand Park is proud to be the site everyone can call 'home' and celebrate together," he added.

Supervisor Gloria Molina said, "Grand Park is the perfect location for a big New Year's Eve celebration, with lots of open space right in the heart of downtown L.A.'s Civic Center. It's already proven a perfect locale for similar public gatherings—including the 2012 Presidential Election, CicLAvia, Mayor Eric Garcetti's swearing-in celebration and a Fourth of July fireworks spectacular. So I know Grand Park will be the place to be on New Year's Eve!"

NYE LA

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Grand Park's "N.Y.E. LA" will showcase a broad range of innovative artists who are creating special pieces symbolic of Los Angeles, commissioned by the park specifically for the New Year's Eve celebration. Appearing throughout the park, these installations will feature work by internationally-acclaimed artists, including: Michael Murphy, whose works challenge the boundaries between the second and third dimensions, often with the use of optical illusions; George McFetridge, who is well-known within the graphic design community for simple, but highly powerful imagery; and Charles Baker, a sculptor whose work often combines elements of realism and absurdity.

Guests will also be treated to a wide range of musical and dance performances throughout the evening, including some of Los Angeles' top DJs from dublab, a non-profit web radio collective devoted to the growth of positive music, arts and culture. Grand Park's main stage on the Event Lawn in front of City Hall will feature a performance by Versa-Style Dance Company, a highly energetic group that fuses Hip-Hop and Afro-Latin dances that are of cultural significance in the community. Headlining the event is Fool's Gold, a Los Angeles-based indie collective that weaves together western pop aesthetics with African rhythms and melodies. As part of the celebration, Angelenos will experience the sights and images of both Los Angeles and New York, as the iconic Los Angeles City Hall becomes a focal point for the "N.Y.E. LA" event. The park will come alive with animated two-dimensional projections on the building throughout the celebration, while three-dimensional images will be projected on the hour.

Throughout the evening, performing artists, including members of Arrow Sign Spinners and face painters from Tribal Markers, will roam the entire park, entertaining and engaging visitors in creative art-making. In addition, Grand Park guests will be able to share their personal wishes for the coming year and see those wishes and their photos projected 100 feet above Grand Park.

"N.Y.E. LA" will culminate with a countdown to 2014. Then, after the clock strikes midnight, Grand Park guests will be amazed by a powerful, highly visual digital mapping display, the size and scope of which has never been seen in Los Angeles. Both The Music Center Plaza and the park will use video screens so guests can enjoy the celebration from any vantage point within the 12 block area. While the park will not be serving alcohol, alcoholic beverages will be available for sale on The Music Center Plaza for those 21 and over. Food and non-alcoholic beverages will be sold both in the park and on the Plaza.

For more information about Grand Park's "N.Y.E. LA," visit grandparkla.org.

Holiday Pet Tips

In the midst of the holiday season, the Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) would like to offer pet owners a few helpful tips as we celebrate the holiday season. "We can get so caught up with all of the holiday festivities, but let's not forget about our four-legged family members. Our pets rely on us to keep them safe, so keep these tips in mind as you celebrate the holidays," said DACC Director, Marcia Mayeda.

- Shiny ornaments on Christmas trees can be particularly attractive to curious pets. Dogs and cats can suffer serious injuries by chewing and swallowing pieces of tree ornaments.
- Many people add special liquid preservatives to the water in Christmas tree stands. Some of these products are harmful to pets that may drink from the water. Be sure to ask if your Christmas tree is "pet safe," before you buy it.
- Keep holiday season plants and flowers away from your pets. Many plants, such as Poinsettias, Christmas candles, English Holly, Christmas berry, Christmas rose, and Mistletoe are poisonous to cats and dogs.
- Gift-wrappings can pose risks to dogs and cats. Your pets may be tempted to chew on wrapping paper or ribbon, which can be harmful if swallowed.
- Electrical wiring is tempting for cats to play with and dogs to chew. Your pet can suffer a severe shock or even be electrocuted by coming into contact with the electrical current in the line. Make sure your pets cannot climb onto areas that put wiring within their reach.
- Turkey is a particular favorite during the holiday season, but the bones easily splinter and should not be given to pets. Bone splinters can puncture an animal's gastro-intestinal tract, causing internal injury, which could result in death.

Employee Assistance Program

Feeling blue? Don't be. The Employee Assistance Program offers confidential professional help at no cost to you. To schedule an appointment or for further information about the program, please call (213) 738-4200



Top 10 Holiday Shopping Tips

Make gift-giving great and avoid the New Year's budget blues by following these hints for the holidays.

1. Stick to a budget.

Prepare a holiday budget before you shop. Pay with cash to keep from spending too much.

2. Use credit cards wisely.

If you pay with a credit card, use just one. If you pay by credit card, you get legal protections if you don't receive what you ordered or if products are defective. Read the terms of your credit card agreement.

3. Get your R&R – refunds and receipts.

Check for a store's refund policy, or ask about them, before you buy. Some stores offer a full refund; others offer only a store credit or no refund at all. Save your receipts and ask for gift receipts. You or the person getting your gifts will need them for returns and exchanges.

4. Check for sale prices.

When you buy sale items, check your receipt before you leave the cash register. Make sure they did not charge you the regular price. If something you buy goes on sale later, ask about sales adjustments and you might get a refund or credit.

5. Get full value from gift cards.

If you receive gift cards, spend them promptly. U.S. consumers waste about \$10 billion a year by not spending their gift cards. Also, you can redeem any retailer gift card for cash if it has a cash value of less than \$10. Donated gift cards are exempt. The law forbids nearly all service fees on retailer gift cards. In California, most gift cards don't expire no matter what the fine print says. (These rules do not apply to bank gift cards, which are issued by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, and Visa and can be used at most stores.)

6. Read the fine print.

If you're making a big purchase, read the contract and understand it before you sign. Check the interest rate and the total cost of the item including interest. Make sure you can afford the total price.

7. Know the way to layaway.

Some bigger stores offer layaway. If you buy an item by layaway, get a full receipt with a description of the item, total price, amount of the down payment, amount and due dates of payments, length of the hold and the store's refund policy.

8. Stay secure online.

When buying online, make sure the website is secure before entering your personal or financial information. Secure websites begin with "https://" rather than just "http://." They also display a locked padlock on the screen.

9. Protect your personal information.

Don't be a victim of identity theft. Do not give personal information over the telephone or online unless you contacted that person or business. Do not write your address, phone number, Social Security, or driver's license numbers on credit-card receipts. Before giving personal or financial information to a business, ask how they will use it and if it will remain confidential.

10. When you give, know where it's going.

Watch out for phony charities that use names that sound like the real charities. Don't be fooled. Look closely and only donate to groups you can trust.



We all know that air pollution is bad for your health. We are just starting to learn exactly how bad.

According to the first national study on the link between autism and air pollution, it has been confirmed in the Environmental Health Perspectives journal that a woman in a high pollution area is twice as likely to have an autistic child as a woman in the cleanest part of the areas in the study.

Ridesharing is more than just saving money, time and lives. It is about saving children from a disorder that can be as crippling as any physical disability.

Do your part to take pride and share the ride. Go to www.rideshare.lacounty.gov for more information on Ridesharing.

Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after their many years of service to the County of Los Angeles:

45+ Years

HEALTH SERVICES: Rose E. Falconett

INTERNAL SERVICES: Robert Olivas

40+ Years

BEACHES & HARBORS: Anderson L. Marshall Jr.

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Sharyn E. Dent-Bray

FIRE: Antonio R. Corral

HEALTH SERVICES: Rosie R. Fine, Willie Wallace

INTERNAL SERVICES: Raymond E. Rincon, Patricia Saucedo

MENTAL HEALTH: Dante P. Rosete

PARKS & RECREATION: Manuel I. Valle

PROBATION: Renee L. Wouters

PUBLIC HEALTH: Luisa M. Aviles, Rita V. Bagby, Verna L. Gardenhire, Addie M. Simon

PUBLIC LIBRARY: Kenneth A. Ure

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Vinnetta Cole, Rosalinda Lopez, Mildred J. Walker, Renea Wright

PUBLIC WORKS: Sherrlyn J. Morris Witt

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Sidney C. Keating

SHERIFF: Jacquelyn Portee

35+ Years

ASSESSOR: Kenneth G. Ryozaiki

FIRE: Martha F. Delgado

HEALTH SERVICES: Manuel S. Carambas, Teresita D. de la Vega, David Madrid, Michelle Payton, Kerrie D. Thomas, Arlene F. Underwood

INTERNAL SERVICES: Edith M. Fukutomi, Gwendolyn Love, Gregory Taylor

MEDICAL EXAMINER-CORONER: Yoriko E. King Walker

PUBLIC HEALTH: Kim D. Ford, Yolanda R. Moreno, Henrietta Schell

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Evelyn Garcia, Clora Mc Craw, Athelene Roberts, Doris Waits

PUBLIC WORKS: Leonard Khoo

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Kathy de la Rosa

SHERIFF: Bertha M. McBeth

SUPERIOR COURT: Deborah A. Luna

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Cristina M. Hernandez, Patrick E. Lima

30+ Years

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Elvira Felix

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: Nancy L. Mansuri

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Loreta Meza

FIRE: Randy Y. Nagaoka

HEALTH SERVICES: Donn Conrad Marquez, Naomi Ramirez, Rebecca Salinas, Dorothy Stephenson

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY: Graciela Chacon-McDon

PROBATION: Chauncey R. White, Donna J. York

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Bernadette J. Everman

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Rhonda E. Taylor

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Ella M. Brown

SHERIFF: James A. Ciglan, Yolanda Fierro, Robert V. Guilbault, Robert G. Horner, Rodney B. Johnson, Richard C. Lopez, Randall J. Olson, Eric D. Rude, Julio A. Salcido, Bennett W. Seno, Anthony A. Shapiro, Kirk E. Smith, Marvin D. Stalworth II, John D. Steele, Diane E. Walker

SUPERIOR COURT: James F. Matthews, Rebecca Ynchausti

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Kathlyn J. Bumcon

25+ Years

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/WEIGHTS & MEASURES: Eric N. Hansen

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Leda R. Brown, Eleazer C. Degbor, Gwendolyn Foster, Duane V. Hubler, Ethel G. Moton, Lang T. Nguyen, Susan J. Rourke

COUNTY COUNSEL: Mary H. Fykes

FIRE: Kevin C. Chaney, Bernard A. Deyo, Bernard V. Roewart, Kathleen T. Zelenski

HEALTH SERVICES: Emma M. Anderson, Antonieta F. Antonio, Enoch Bamaca, Annie P. Bowers, Gloria Duron, Rosa M. Hurtado, Toni Z. Hutchinson, Hae Z. Lee, Hugo Lopez, Lynda L. Napolitan, Cynthia A. Sheffield, Pailin V. Vuthi

MENTAL HEALTH: Linda G. Dunn, Michael C. Udeorji

PROBATION: Bruce E. Jackson

PUBLIC LIBRARY: Patricia L. Haines

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Amy Huu Luu Hong, Misi Savea, Jose S. Timbol

PUBLIC WORKS: Yolanda Perez

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Restituta L. Del Rosario

SHERIFF: Kim M. Frazier, Frederic E. Glotz, Michael L. Holland, Danny E. Ingle, Ernest T. Ofeldt IV, Gerardo G. Paredes, Claudine M. Sanchez, Alba R. Yates

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Neeley C. Carter Jr., Deloris Jordan, Joyce Robins

54TH ANNUAL L.A. COUNTY HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Now in its 54th year, the admission-free L.A. County Holiday Celebration is a favorite tradition for Angelenos, many of whom have been coming to the live show for years. Many more watch this three-hour music and dance spectacular at home as they gather together with family and friends. Live and repeat broadcasts on Channel KCET-TV, which has been broadcasting the Holiday Celebration live since 1965, have made it a popular addition to holiday festivities.

Reflecting the incredible diversity of the region, the Holiday Celebration features music groups, dance companies and choirs from all corners of the County, representing a mosaic of Los Angeles' holiday traditions. The Holiday Celebration takes place from **3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24, 2013**, at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion at The Music Center and is sponsored by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

With a combination of returning favorites and new groups, highlights for this year's show include **Aditya Prakash Ensemble**, blending classical Indian music with jazz and Latin

rhythms; **Gypsy Allstars**, featuring sons of the internationally recognized Gipsy Kings; Grammy Award®-winning Chicano rock band **Quetzal**; **Ate9 dANCEcOMPANY**, directed by former Batsheva dancer Danielle Agami; **JazzAntiqua Dance and Music Ensemble**, presenting a piece inspired by classic gospel hymn, "Blessed Quietness;" **Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company**, celebrating the Aztec roots of Mexican culture; **Artemusica**, performing in Baroque style; **Colburn Children's Choir and Young Men's Chorus**, singing in Hebrew and English; and **Immaculate Heart of Mary Children's Choir** (photo below with Judy Collins), performing traditional Filipino songs.

The Holiday Celebration is free to the public. No reservations or tickets are required. Seating is on a first come, first served basis so arrive early — festivities begin on The Music Center Plaza at 12:30 p.m. Doors to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion open at 2:30 p.m. and the show starts promptly at 3 p.m. Parking underneath The Music Center is also free, or take Metro.

The Holiday Celebration is broadcast live on KCET-TV and then rebroadcast from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m., and again on December 25, 2013 at noon, 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. It is streamed live at www.kcet.org. Learn more by visiting HolidayCelebration.org, calling (213) 972-3099 or checking out [Facebook.com/LAHolidayCelebration](https://www.facebook.com/LAHolidayCelebration).

Happy Holidays from the County!

Photo by Ed Krieger

